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San Francisco, August 7, 1899.

WAR AND ITS WOES AND EVILS.

"If the people let their representatives in Congress hamper the Administration, as they did last winter, when they refused to put the Army on a proper footing as to size, permanence, and organization, then the people have themselves to thank if the war lingers while difficulties and dangers increase."

Gov. Roosevelt, Ocean Grove, N. J., Aug. 3, 1899.

Editor *NEWS LETTER*:

Sir: There has been such a cloudburst of sophistry; such a deluge of declamatory humbug, about the invigorating, ennobling, elevating influences of war, intensified by an infusion of cant on the enervating effects of "slothful, swollen ease" that it seems timely to recall a few opinions of statesmen and sages of the past on the baleful effects of war.

The prattle about "slothful, swollen ease" is simply a flippant utterance, having its inception in the demoralizing influence of wealth upon the favored few—the "upper ten." The lower millions know nothing of any such condition.

Before proceeding, I will suggest that a fairly comprehensive view of the industrial and economic conditions prevailing in this country does not lead to

the conclusion that seventy out of our seventy-five millions of population are lolling in "slothful, swollen ease." On the contrary, I am quite confident these seventy millions, "the lower millions" of industrious, well-meaning citizens, are not surfeited with appreciable ease of any kind. Their lives are one long, incessant, wearisome struggle for bread—either in the field, in the bowels of the earth, in the workshop, in the counting house, or on the high seas; or else of enforced idleness with its attendant want and misery. And upon these a nation depends for its development and prosperity. If they are not constrained to lead "the strenuous life" who are?

But to our subject, WAR AND ITS WOES AND EVILS: It has been asserted that without war to excite and energize the human mind, some of its noblest faculties—courage, magnanimity, fortitude, etc. would perish.

Bishop Porteus said, "One murder makes a villain, thousands a hero."

Thos. Jefferson said, "War is an instrument wholly uncertain in its operation and frequently, if not generally, occasions more evil than it cures or prevents."

W. E. Channing said, "War, it is alleged, kindles patriotism. But the patriotism which is cherished by war is ordinarily false and spurious, a vice and not a virtue, a scourge to the world, a narrow, unjust passion which aims to exalt a particular state on the humiliation and destruction of other nations."

War has always been adverse to political freedom. A Roman statesman declared that "Laws are silent in the midst of arms," and history proves this.

The advocates of war dare not impose for its support a direct tax upon the people. They would not bear it; they would rebel. But this drainer of our pockets comes not to us in the exasperating shape of a tax. It lurks in our coffee and tea, in our food and raiment; hides in our books and adornments, and dwells unobserved in everything we undertake to buy and pay for. We never think, when we make a purchase, that we are giving more than its real value for the article bought. This is the reason why war is thought by so many to be a money-making business. But the cost is none the less real, and the destruction of property none the less deplorable, for not being directly perceived.

In an essay upon the "Inefficiency of War," Hon. Wm. Jay said: "The folly of war is apparent from the fact that the object for which it is waged could almost always be obtained by other and less hazardous means, and that, when obtained, it is rarely worth the blood and treasure lavished in its acquisition. Cicero long since declared 'the worst peace is preferable to the best war,' and Franklin remarked: 'Whatever advantage one nation would obtain from another, it would be cheaper to purchase such advantage with ready money than to pay the expense of acquiring it by war.'

"The ancient despotism of France was overthrown by representative assemblies, and a republic established on its ruin; and that republic was annihilated by an adventurous soldier through the agency of the army entrusted to him for its defense. The liberties of England have been acquired not by force of arms, but by the energy of parliaments. *The ruin of almost every republic that has been blotted from the list of nations may be ascribed to the military spirit fostered by its citizens.*"

In 1836 R. P. Stebbins said: "Give me the money that has been spent in war and I will purchase every foot of land upon the globe. I will clothe every man, woman and child in an attire that kings and queens would be proud of; I will build a school house upon every hillside and in every valley over the whole earth. The darkness of ignorance would fall before the bright light of the sun of science; paganism would be crushed by the fall of

her temples; war would no more stalk over the earth, trampling all that is beautiful and lovely."

Thomas S. Grimke said in 1836 on "Peace": "The great objection to war is not so much the number of lives and the amount of property it destroys, as its moral influence on nations and individuals. It corrupts the moral taste and hardens the heart; strengthens and cherishes the base and violent passions, destroys the distinguishing features of Christian charity—its universality teems with mockery and contempt for the virtue of humility; weakens the sense of moral obligation, famishes the spirit of improvement, usefulness, and benevolence, and inculcates the horrible maxim that murder and robbery are matters of State expediency."

In a Fourth of July oration, 1845, Charles Sumner said: "In our age there can be no peace that is not honorable; there can be no war that is not dishonorable. The true honor of a nation is to be found only in deeds of justice, and in the happiness of its people, all of which are inconsistent with war. In the clear eyes of Christian judgment, vain are its victories, infamous its spoils. To Louis Philippe belongs the honest fame of first publishing from the throne (1843) the truth that *Peace is endangered by preparations for war*. 'The sentiment, or rather the principle,' he says, 'that in peace you must prepare for war, is one of difficulty and danger; for while we keep armies to preserve peace, they are at the same time incentives and instruments of war.'"

In 1816, W. E. Channing, said: "Our ordinary sympathies seem to forsake us when war is named. The sufferings and death of a single fellow-being often excite a tender and active compassion, but we hear without emotion of thousands enduring every variety of woe in war. A single murder in peace thrills through our frames; the countless murders of war are heard as an entertaining tale. War not only exercises a baneful influence upon the character of the unhappy men who engage in it, but it assails the prosperity and morals of a community; its influence on the political condition is alarming. It arms government with a dangerous patronage, multiplies dependents and instruments of oppression, and generates a power, which, in the hands of the energetic and aspiring, can hardly fail to prostrate a free constitution. War organizes a body of men who lose the feelings of the citizen in the soldier; whose habits detach them from the community; whose ruling passion is devotion to a chief; who are innured in camp to despotic sway; who are accustomed to accomplish their ends by force, and to sport with the rights and happiness of their fellow-beings; who delight in tumult, adventure and peril, and turn with scorn from the quiet labors of peace. In a community where precedence is given to the military profession, freedom cannot long endure.

"War feeds and grows on the blood which it sheds. The successful nation, flushed by victory, pants for new laurels—peace becomes a truce, a feverish repose, a respite to sharpen anew the sword, and prepare for future struggles.

"A genuine, enlightened patriot discerns that the welfare of his own country is involved in the general progress of society; and, in the character of a patriot, as well as of a Christian, he rejoices in the liberty and prosperity of other communities, and is anxious to maintain with them the relation of peace and amity.

"It is said that a military spirit is the defense of a country. But more frequently it endangers the vital interests of a nation by embroiling it with other states. This spirit, like every other passion, is impatient for gratification, and often precipitates a nation into war.

"What especially distinguishes war is, not that man is slain, but that he is slain, spoiled, crushed by the cruelty, the injustice, the treachery, the murder-

ous hand of man. The evil is a moral evil. War is the concentration of all human crimes. Under its standard gather violence, malignity, rape, fraud, perfidy, rapacity, and lust. If it only slew man, it would do little. It turns man into a beast of prey. Nor is this all. There is found in war a cold-hearted indifference to human miseries and wrongs, perhaps more shocking than the bad passions it calls forth. When I look back on the ages of conflict through which the race has passed, what most moves me is not the awful amount of suffering which war has inflicted—the terrible thought is, that this has been the work of crime; that men, whose great law is love, have been one another's butchers; that God's children have stained His beautiful earth with one another's blood, that the shriek which comes to us from all regions and ages, has been extorted by human cruelty; that man has been a demon and has turned earth into a hell."

In his recent address at the grave of Grotius, Ambassador Andrew D. White declared it to be the duty of civilization to "go on with the work of humanizing war."

But how shall that be humanized which is inhuman in its very conception and in every detail of its operation? "War's a brain-spattering, windpipe splitting art," wrote Byron. "War is hell," said General Sherman and Prince von Bismarck.

No, no, no! We cannot humanize this hideously inhuman thing. Our task is to abolish it as we have abolished its twin sister, piracy. It is ours to find a better way, and to follow it.

William Lloyd Garrison said "the popular clap-trap, 'My country; may she always be right—but right or wrong—my country,' is simply a diabolical maxim," and I will add that a more baleful piece of sophistry, a more anti-Christian sentiment was never written. It has been the miserable apology for unnumbered crimes.

"Loyalty to country is noble, but loyalty to country and to truth is nobler still." Commodore Decatur, at a banquet at Norfolk, in 1816, gave his famous toast: "Our country; in her intercourse with foreign nations may she always be in the right; but our country, right or wrong," then the soldier spoke. Hon. Carl Schurz, in the United States Senate, in 1872, said "Our country, right or wrong! When right to be kept right; when wrong to be put right!"—then the statesman spoke.

In conclusion I take pleasure in quoting from Hon. Wm. J. Bryan's speech at Chicago, only a few days ago: "It is not for the Filipinos that we plead. It is for 75,000,000 of people, the greatest in the world, and yet a people not great enough to do harm to the humblest people in all the world."

JOHN J. VALENTINE.